

# Assessing an Effective Partisan Legislature

## Law Making Function

1. Participation      allowing diverse points of view to be heard with an actual opportunity to affect the outcome
2. Dispersal of power      aiding diversity of views in debate and decision making;  
in committee: both sides have real voice and power to change
3. Strong leadership      essential to legislative effectiveness; must be a person who: thinks strategically, is a problem-solver, is a consensus builder; and assumes responsibility for the legislature's effectiveness
4. Partisanship      a cohesive majority will always drive the process; minority rights must be protected; leader should avoid relegating minority to role of mischief-maker; unrestrained partisanship damages civility; a change in the balance of power affects civility – relationships change, they become more fragile, they require commitment and hard work to maintain
5. Deliberation      the exchange of ideas, the give and take of compromise, occurs on the floor, in committee, private conversations, leaders conferences, and over meals and is a benefits due to the possibility that a number of legislators will be influenced by these discussions
6. Consensus building      opposing sides negotiating results in compromise; this is done to increase the number of adherents for the bill; this is the opposite of drawing battle lines

## **Facilitating Factors**

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| 7. Leader qualities | able, intelligent, energetic, dedicated, politically skillful  |
| 8. Integrity        | capitol community behaves ethically; the leadership strongly supports and enforces such behavior [ethical behavior is doing more than is required while also doing less than is allowed] |
| 9. Institutionalism | legislators identify with the House and the Legislature as political institutions  |
- Concern:
- dedication to the legislature
  - care about well-being of the institution
  - engage in institution building
  - defend the institution
  - encourage good behavior
- Community: culture of the legislature
- civility
  - collegiality
  - socialization